The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor concerning in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WHOLE NO. 1611 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1942 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 32, NO. 8

FACING the FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

President Roosevelt told us in his Washington's Birthday fireside chat how labor can help win the war. He said:

"Here are three high purposes for every American:

"1. We shall not stop work for a single day. If any dispute arises we shall keep on working while the dispute is solved by mediation, or conciliation or arbitration—until the war is won.

"2. We shall not demand special gains or special privileges or special advantages for any one group or occupation.

"3. We shall give up inconvenience and modify the routine of our lives if our country asks us to do so. We will do it cheerfully, remembering that the common enemy seeks to destroy every home and every freedom in every part of our land."

We can assure the President without hesitation that the five million members of the A.F.L. will live up to this program in every particular.

The AFL already has taken a solemn no-strike pledge. It has religiously refrained from making excessive demands or seeking special privileges. It has cheerfully made major sacrifices and its members are even now arranging to place part of their hard-earned wages every week on the line for defense bonds.

Employers Playing Dirty Pool

But labor's effort should not be entirely one-sided. If the workers of America give up the exercise of their economic strength—the right to strike—for the duration of the war, they expect a square deal from employers, the public and the Government.

In one respect this has been assured by the creation of the War Labor Board by President Roosevelt, as recommended by the American Federation of Labor. Labor relies upon this Board to safeguard its rights, now that it has voluntarily surrendered the strike weapon and has agreed to settle all disputes by peaceful means.

But we are sorry to say that many employers and big-money interests generally, are not playing the game. They are making, contrary to the President's express desires, to take advantage of labor's position.

Knowing that labor has pledged itself not to strike under any circumstances, some employers are refusing to bargain in good faith. They turn a deaf ear to all requests for wage increases, despite swelling profits and booming production. They bind themselves to labor's just right to collective bargaining and then proceed to violate it by the tricks of the trade. They are even attempting to break down standards set in existing contracts when they come up for renewal.

That is dirty pool and the pity of it is that the press is actively engaged in helping the perpetrators of such mean tactics. They help to fan labor unions with hate feed at every opportunity. And completely ignore to labor's tremendous contributions to the nation's war effort.

Dangerous Tactics

The newspapers are playing a sinister role in the present anti-labor campaign. When such labor-baiters as Rep. Howard W. Smith of Virginia come to the fore with vengeful and reprehensible legislation proposals aimed at the destruction of all labor protective laws, they get columns of favorable publicity. Every ranting and empty-headed Congressman who takes a crack at the workers gets a pat on the back from the press.

This is a dangerous thing. Nothing is better calculated to arouse the resentment of workers than unmerited denunciation. Nothing is more likely to destroy their morale than the chorus of hate led by the howling hyenas of entrenched reaction.

America needs its loyal and devoted workers more today than ever before. America can't win this war with a fifth column in its midst. An overall industrial front is kept in the best of shape.

Would anyone in this country think it might help win the war if we put our soldiers, sailors and fliers on short rations? Would anyone dare to suggest that the men in the ranks on the battlefields be blamed if we lose a battle in the Pacific?

Yet the campaign of calumny against labor is just as ridiculous and dangerous. If our workers don't earn enough to live decently and keep their families in good health, our war production program will suffer. If our workers do not get proper rest and recreation, they won't be able to do the job. If our workers are continually hounded and berated by the press and public they will lose heart.

We urge all those who are as interested as we are in winning the war to bear these truths always in mind.

Green Denounces Press Statements That AFL Asked Draft Deferment

Gen. Hershey Acted On Own Responsibility In Authorizing Exemptions of Industry, Labor and Government Men

Washington, D. C.—President William Green indignantly denounced as "utterly false" newspaper statements that the American Federation of Labor had asked the Selective Service System to grant special deferment to representatives of labor unions.

"No request for special treatment under the Selective Service Act has been made or will be made by the American Federation of Labor," Mr. Green flatly declared.

"The American Federation of Labor believes that the duty to help win the defense of the nation falls equally upon all citizens and that it should place no special privileges of any kind in the administration of the Selective Service laws.

"We feel confident that an equitable policy of deferments will be developed by the Selective Service Agency which will make sure that every citizen's productive capacity is put to the best use for winning the war."

The Selective Service Headquarters here also denied that any representatives of the American Federation of Labor had asked, either verbally or in writing, for special consideration to labor representatives.

A high official serving under Draft Director Hershey informed the American Federation of Labor that the Selective Service System had acted entirely within its own responsibility and judgment in issuing a directive to local draft boards authorizing them to call authorized representatives of Government, labor and industry who are key men in the maintenance of harmonious relations in plants.

The official text of the directive, signed by Gen. Hershey, follows:

"Memorandum to All Local Boards

"Effective Date: At once.

"Subject: Occupational Deferment of Registrants in Labor Relations (III)

"1. It is considered in the national interest and essential to the war production program that a harmonious relationship be maintained between labor and industry. To accomplish this purpose it is desirable that there continue to be duly authorized and competent representatives of Government, labor, and industry who will, in considering and disposing of questions of industrial interest, expedite the successful production of the war.

"2. Registrants who are key men in the maintenance of such harmonious relations and who are employed for that activity by the Government, by industrial organizations, or by local, national, or international labor organizations may be given serious consideration for deferment.

"3. In cases arising under this memorandum, the local board may require the completion and filing of the Affidavit of Support (Form for Occupational Deferment (DSS Form 42A) and such other information as the local board considers necessary, and shall proceed to classify the registrant in accordance with the provisions of sections 622.21 to 622.26 of the Selective Service Regulations, Second Edition."

WAR LABOR BOARD BACKS AFL UNION

Rejects CIO Attempt to Suspend Closed-Shop Contract

Washington, D. C.—The National War Labor Board, by a vote of 10 to 2, rejected a CIO demand for temporary suspension of a closed-shop provision in an AFL contract covering 3,500 workers of the Los Angeles Railway Corporation and the Los Angeles Motor Coach Company.

The majority of the War Labor Board declared that the agreement between the companies and the Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railway Employes (AFL) was voluntary, had been sustained as valid by the Supreme Court of California and, therefore, the board could not interfere.

Wayne L. Morse, a member for the public, wrote the majority decision and he was joined in it by the three other public members. The employers, and two AFL representatives, R. J. Thomas and Clinton Golden, CIO officials, dissented, but did not write an opinion.

The board majority refused the request of the CIO's Transport Workers' Union of America for a board election among the company's employes and said that while the CIO had a legal right to further appeals contesting validity of the closed-shop agreement, the dissenting union should abide now by the ruling of the California courts and the decision of the Supreme Court of California in this case."

"The decisive characteristic of a closed-shop contract," the decision said, "is that it renders it very difficult for a rival union, such as the CIO in this case, to gain control of collective bargaining rights in the industry. That is one of the chief reasons why both the CIO and the AFL are desirous of obtaining a closed-shop contract when they can do so. However, when one union, such as the AFL in this case, gains a closed-shop contract, and when a court decrees that that particular contract is a valid contract, such as the present one has been done in this case, that legal fact must be deemed controlling in the premises."

For the board to decide otherwise, Mr. Morse added, would enthrone "in the encouragement of jurisdictional union strife."

AFL MEN DID THE JOB! PRESS PLEASE COPY

Washington, D. C.—Newspapers which are casting aspersions on labor's fidelity to the recent launching of the battleship Alabama at the Norfolk (Va.) navy yard, nine months ahead of schedule, omitted an important detail. They neglected to mention that practically all the men who worked on the big man-o-war are trade unionists.

"The overwhelming majority of the 7,000 hard-working men and members of the International Association of Machinists or other AFL Metal Trades unions," said P. Wetherby, secretary-treasurer of District No. 44 of the Machinists. "They've done a splendid job."

250 UNION DRESSMAKERS GIVE BLOOD TO RED CROSS

New York City—Two hundred and fifty union dressmakers made a mass contribution of 125 quarts of fluid plasma to the American Red Cross here, Feb. 17, for the blood donations drive for the Army and Navy.

The union, Local 22 of the International Ladies' Garment Workers, asked the Blood Donor's Service of the New York Chapter of the Red Cross to set aside Tuesday 21st as the day for a series of Local 22 Blood Donor Days. Local 22 has a membership of 27,000.

UNION EXECUTIVES PLAN LABOR RED CROSS RALLY

New York City—The executives of all organized labor groups and union officials of this city are planning a rally to be known as Labor's Red Cross Mobilization, to be held early in March at Webster Hall, to stress the importance of labor's contribution to the war in industry and civilian defense, and the importance of the Red Cross to civilian and military life.

Vincent J. Ferris, secretary of the Allied Printing Trades Council, is chairman of the joint labor committee planning this program.

NATHAN STRAUS ASSAILS FOES OF SLUM CLEARANCE

Washington, D. C.—With a yardstick as a prop, Nathan Straus recently knocked hooting. Nathan Straus resigned as U. S. Housing Administrator.

"The ownership and operation of slums," Straus told President Roosevelt, "will be one of the largest and most profitable industries in America. This industry has declared that the United States of America in this year 1942, as that democracy and freedom shall prevail on earth."

The labor representatives displayed a huge copy of a telegram received from William Green, AFL President, in which he declared that "on the battle fronts, in the munition plants and through Defense Bond purchases, five million AFL members are united for freedom."

The celebration at the old Concord battlefield typified the meetings arranged by AFL unions in all 48 States throughout the nation, Green said, referring to the hundreds of Washington's Birthday labor gatherings held to hear the special radio appeals by Price Green and Henry Morgenthau, Jr., Secretary of the Treasury.

Secretary Taylor announced that through the ranks of reserves from 1,200 local unions in the state, more than $10,000,000 in Defense Bonds had been purchased individually by AFL members in Massachusetts for themselves, and collectively for their union treasuries.

"I believe this is a conservative figure," Taylor said, "when one remembers the ranging of reserves of dollars being set aside every payday by union workers who have volunteered to enroll in regular payroll savings plans."

Labor Leaders Pledge At Concord To Go Over Top In Bond Drive

Boston—The officers and executive council of the Massachusetts State Federation of Labor took part in an impressive ceremony at the foot of the statue of the Minute Man in Concord, inaugurating at the very birthplace of American liberty, the American Federation of Labor's nationwide billion dollar Defense Savings Bond drive.

Led by Nicholas P. Morrissey, president, and Kenneth I. Taylor, secretary of the Federation, the labor chiefs, representing 250,000 organized workers in Massachusetts, raised their hands and took this oath:

"We do hereby solemnly pledge to our nation and our God, to do all within our power to raise the sum of $50,000,000 as our share of the one billion dollars in Defense Savings Bonds which the American Federation of Labor has pledged to the United States of America in this year 1942, so that democracy and freedom shall prevail on earth."

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Millions Hear Green Pledge To Government Billion Dollars From AFL For Defense Bonds; Morgenthau Hails Labor's Aid In Campaign

President Green's Message

The text of President Green's radio address on defense bonds follows:

Throughout the nation tonight, five million working men and women who make up the American Federation of Labor are gathered together at mass meetings or are sitting beside their home radios to participate in the official inauguration of "Labor Invests in Victory Week."

In their behalf, I hereby solemnly pledge to the Government of the United States that they will invest one billion dollars of their hard-earned wages this year for victory in the war.

They will do this by purchasing defense bonds and stamps from their weekly pay checks and their savings.

I firmly expect every union worker under the banner of the American Federation of Labor to arrange to do this on a systematic basis before the coming week is over. Your local union and your employer will be glad to help you.

One billion dollars is a lot of money. There probably is not a single individual in the United States who could produce such a staggering amount for a lump sum investment—certainly no workingman.

But the five million members of the American Federation of Labor collectively can and will do it. And therein we can find another lesson in the value of organization and new corroboration of our national motto—"In unity there is strength."

While the national quota of our organization for the year is one billion dollars, the personal quota of each individual member is only $3.85 a week. All you have to do—each and every one of you—is to put not less than $3.85 aside every week this year for the purchase of defense stamps and bonds and our goal will be realized.

I am confident that every member of the American Federation of Labor will live up to this patriotic obligation and even go beyond it in the success of our vital campaign.

Success is virtually guaranteed by the response we already have received from our members and our affiliated unions. I am glad to reveal for the first time tonight that already, before two months of the year have elapsed, members of the American Federation of Labor and their unions have purchased or subscribed for a total of more than 200 million dollars worth of defense bonds.

Every mail arriving at my office is flooded with new pledges. I cannot enumerate here all the splendid achievements reported to date but I would like to mention a few outstanding examples. One State Federation alone promises that A. F. of L. members in its jurisdiction will buy 100 million dollars worth of bonds before the year is out. Another State Federation has mapped a 50 million dollar purchasing program. A single union has already arranged a payroll allotment plan covering 20,000 members which guarantees the purchase of 25 million dollars worth. A dozen other unions have adopted similar plans for five million dollars or more each.

Local unions are the arms and feet of the men in the American Federation of Labor—are likewise going all-out in this drive. They are promoting more and more agreements whereby employers will deduct specified amounts from the weekly pay check of each worker toward the purchase of bonds for these workers.

Union funds—including the amounts held in trust for members under life, health, disability and unemployment insurance systems—are being invested in defense bonds to the limit. The American Federation of Labor itself has purchased $100,000 worth of bonds. All our affiliated national and local unions have made similar investments to the extent of their resources, and will continue to do so.

These are some of the concrete and factual reasons why I feel certain that the American Federation of Labor will achieve its billion-dollar defense bond goal. But there are other reasons—less tangible, perhaps, but even more compelling—upon which my assurance is based.

I know and you know that America must win this war. There are no two ways about that. Our lives, our liberty, our security and our honor depend upon victory. American workers realize even more clearly than any other citizens the terrible issues at stake. For if the cause of democracy goes down to defeat they can look forward only to becoming coolies for Japanese war lords or slaves to Hitler.

The workers of America are united today by the single, inspiring determination that this must never happen. Many thousands of our members have joined the colors and are wearing our country's uniform. Thousands of others have sent their sons, their brothers and their wives to the battlefronts. Millions who cannot serve on the firing line are giving devoted and indispensable service on the industrial front at home.

Yet you know and I know that it takes money to win wars, as well as blood and sweat and suffering. We know that for every man directly facing the enemy, the work of eighteen men is necessary on our mills and factories to produce war materials. We know that the most urgent need of the moment is for planes and guns and tanks and ships in vast quantities for our own armed forces and those of our allies.

The President of the United States has told us that this giant victory production program is going to cost the nation 56 billion dollars in the coming fiscal year. Where is the money going to come from? The Government cannot raise this huge sum by taxes without bankrupting the country. It must borrow the money. And that is where you and I and every American come in.

Every time we purchase a defense bond or stamp we are giving America a helping hand, we are making our idle dollar fight for America, and, at the same time, we are doing ourselves a good turn. For defense bonds are the safest and wisest investment any American can find for his savings. We must face the facts. If America should lose the war, our money would be worthless to us. But when America wins this war—and we are going to win it—our defense bonds will constitute a reserve fund to tide us over hard times when opportunities for jobs may be scarce.

For all of these compelling reasons, I make this earnest appeal to the five million members of the American Federation of Labor:—Let not one of us fail to heed your country's call!

This afternoon, in a symbolic ceremony before the statue of the Minute Man at Concord, the officers of the Massachusetts State Federation of Labor pledged with upraised hands that labor will do its part.

Tonight, on the birthday of the father of our country, I ask each one of you in the name of liberty, in the name of democracy, in the name of humanity to repeat that pledge with me:—We will do our part for victory!

AFL Chief Reveals Workers And Unions Already Have Purchased 200 Million Dollars Worth

Washington, D. C.—Millions of AFL workers throughout the nation heard their chief, William Green, pledge in their behalf in a special Washington's Birthday broadcast that they would help America win the war by purchasing a billion dollars worth of defense bonds and stamps this year.

Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, Jr., speaking on the same program, called the AFL drive "a magnificent example to the whole country" and emphasized that it represents the largest single pledge of funds to come from any group in America.

President Green's address inaugurated "Labor Invests in Victory Week." Hundreds of special mass meetings were held by central labor councils and by local unions all over the country to listen to the broadcast.

Expressing assurance that the AFL goal will be fully achieved, Mr. Green revealed for the first time that affiliated unions and their members already have purchased more than 200 million dollars worth of defense bonds and stamps.

He pointed out that the billion-dollar goal means that each individual AFL member will have to buy at least $3.85 worth of bonds and stamps each week this year out of his or her wages and salary.

"I firmly expect every union worker under the banner of the American Federation of Labor to arrange to do this before the coming week is over," he declared. "Your local union and your employer will be glad to help you.

"I am confident that every member of the AFL will live up to this patriotic obligation and even go beyond it to assure the success of our vital campaign."

Mr. Green emphasized that AFL workers are united by the single determination to win the war. They realize more than other citizens the terrible issues at stake, he said.

"For if the cause of democracy goes down to defeat," Mr. Green explained, "they can look forward only to becoming coolies for Japanese war lords or slaves to Hitler.

It takes money to win wars, just as much as "blood, sweat and suffering," Mr. Green pointed out. He said it would bankrupt the nation to attempt to finance the $6 billion dollar victory production program by taxes. The government must borrow this money, he stressed, and workers can help Uncle Sam by buying bonds with their spare dollars.

"I make this earnest appeal to the five million members of the American Federation of Labor—let not one of you fail to heed your country's call!"

In responding, Secretary Morgenthau said that organized labor in this country "has always recognized fascism for what it is, and has known from the beginning that the fascist system was a deadly menace to our free institutions."

"Today, as you foresaw, the tide of fascist conquest and barbarism is sweeping the whole world," he said. "This evil thing in field gray uniform and hobnail boots is creeping up, even on us in our sheltered continent. It has broke loose on both sides of us.

"We know that we are not safe, even here in America.

"As I have said repeatedly, this is not a token war. It cannot be fought or won by token effort. It is a war of desperate seriousness. It is so serious that it allows no margin of safety for any of us."

Labor's Honor Roll!

Washington, D. C.—Reports of swelling purchases of defense bonds by national and international unions and their members continue to pour into AFL headquarters. Among the latest received are:

INTERNATIONAL LADIES' GARMENT WORKERS—This union has completed plans for purchase of $25,000,000 worth of bonds by members in cooperation with the U. S. Treasury Department during the first six months of this year.

BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS—Purchases by the international, its locals and members now total $6,006,277.

HATTERS, CAP AND MILLINERY WORKERS—Members have agreed to buy $5,000,000 worth of bonds.

BOILERMAKERS INT'L. UNION—Estimate of purchases by international, local unions and members to date—$10,000,000.

MEAT CUTTERS AND BUTCHER WORKMEN—Total purchases by international, locals and members now over $1,000,000 mark—more coming.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF MUSICIANS—This union and its locals have purchased a total of $849,131 in bonds. No figures available yet on purchases by members.

PHOTO-ENGRAVERS—This union purchased $20,000 in defense bonds, $22,500 in savings bonds and $152,000 in U. S. Treasury Bonds. A poll of local unions shows purchases of $122,114 in defense bonds to date. Incomplete reports on membership purchases show a total of $148,144 to date.

MAINTENANCE OF WAY EMPLOYES—Purchases by Brotherhood and its divisions—$250,000. Six thousand employes of Union Pacific Railroad have bought $230,340 on payroll allotment plan and have subscribed for $48,000 more each month.

OPERATIVE PLASTERERS—International has purchased limit of $100,000. No data available yet on local union and member purchases.

MACHINISTS—International purchased $500,000 worth, will buy $50,000 more. No data available yet on purchases by local lodges and members.

LETTER CARRIERS—Association purchased $115,000, many members on payroll allotment plan proposed by Post Office Department but no figures yet available on amount of purchases.

BROTHERHOOD ELECTRIC RAILWAY AND MOTOR COACH EMPLOYES—International purchased $117,500, three divisions, $160,000. Union also has invested $558,000 in other Government bonds.

POCKETBOOK AND NOVELTY WORKERS—Union bought $75,000, locals $76,800. Locals selling bonds to members, one having set a $50,000 goal.

STATE FEDERATIONS OF LABOR

ILLINOIS—"Organized labor of this state will undoubtedly purchase 100 million dollars worth of defense bonds and stamps in the AFL campaign," NEW YORK—"Our goal is 50 million dollars worth of defense bonds and stamps in the first six months of this year. Purchases to date by AFL unions members in this state approximate 10 million dollars. MASSACHUSETTS—"We solemnly pledge to do all within our power to raise at least 50 million dollars as our share of the AFL goal. TEXAS—"Millions already have been invested by labor here and millions more will be forthcoming." INDIANA—"More than a million dollars already subscribed by AFL unions here and 85 per cent payroll allotment plan, many 100 per cent." OREGON—"Our members and unions have pledged to purchase more than five millions dollars worth of defense bonds during the next year." ALABAMA—"Union purchases here already one million dollars."

CENTRAL LABOR UNIONS

PITTSBURGH—"About 30 million dollars worth of bonds will be purchased by AFL members in Pittsburgh district." LOS ANGELES—"$300,000 in bonds purchased by local unions, many times that by union members." ST. LOUIS—"Incomplete total purchases here $455,000." DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA—"Local unions already have purchased $460,000 worth of bonds." ST. PAUL—"Every AFL union in industrial establishments here has adopted payroll allotment plan, many 100 per cent." ESSEX TRADES COUNCIL, NEWARK, N. J.—"We have sold to date $100,000 worth. Estimate labor in Essex County has purchased total of $800,000."

Building Service Employes Union Wins $1,131,000 Annual Pay Boost

New York City.—A new three-year agreement covering 425 buildings and 7,500 building service employes in the mid-town area was signed in the office of Mayor LaGuardia at City Hall between the Building Service Employes Union, Local 32B, and the Midtown and Penn Zone Realty Associations.

The agreement, providing for a wage increase of 10 per cent amounting to $1,131,000 annually, was based upon an award made by Arthur S. Mayer, chairman of the State Mediation Board, acting as special mediator in negotiations begun Dec. 1.

The new contract, providing for a closed shop in all the buildings involved, is retroactive to Feb. 4 and will remain in effect until Feb. 3, 1943.

Under the agreement, the wage and hour clauses may be reopened on Feb. 2, 1943, and Feb. 2, 1944.

Wage scales under the new agreement are readjusted as follows: In Class A buildings, the minimum weekly wage is raised from $29.25 to $31.08; in Class B buildings, from $28.50 to $29.19, and in Class C buildings from $25 to $27.50. Employes now earning above the minimum wage scales are protected by the 10 per cent blanket increase.

The agreement provides for overtime pay at the rate of time and three-quarters for all employes except watchmen who work in excess of the weekly schedule of forty-six hours a week.